

FEMA Reaches Historic \$30 Billion Milestone for the Recovery of Puerto Rico

Release Date: abril 16, 2023

These funds represent over 10,600 projects that will address damages after the passage of Hurricane María

San Juan, Puerto Rico –Highways, parks, hospitals, educational institutions, water and electricity infrastructure. These are just some of the areas included in projects amounting to \$30 billion in allocations from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The assistance is destined for the reconstruction of Puerto Rico after the passage of Hurricane María, to address these and other social and essential service facilities.

Over 10,600 projects cover various categories under Public Assistance funds to address infrastructure whose renovations will benefit the entire island.

“We celebrate the \$30 billion milestone because this translates into an unprecedented and comprehensive reconstruction for this and future generations. Through these funds, Puerto Rico will experience a resilient recovery, so essential in planning for future atmospheric events,” explained Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator José G. Baquero.

One of the main development drivers of the country is the University of Puerto Rico. With over \$750 million to optimize their structures, the university’s campuses will continue to train world-class professionals and promote important academic research; and the Río Piedras Botanical Garden will provide rest and recreational areas for its visitors, while serving as a living laboratory to study tropical plants and various bird species.

Another outstanding project in post-secondary education is the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music, which is already under construction. Due to its historical value, the facilities of this specialized public university had a damage assessment that addressed the reconstruction of a 19th century building, to which FEMA allocated over \$1.5 million.



FEMA

Page 1 of 3

Meanwhile, due to its importance for recreational and socioeconomic development, Las Cascadas Park in Aguadilla had close to \$1 million to reopen its doors. The over 40-year-old park is one of the economic engines of the municipality. On the other hand, the Roberto Clemente Walker Stadium in Carolina is already receiving the public, following the allocation of nearly \$18.4 million from the agency. This reconstruction not only benefits professional baseball and the home of the *Gigantes*, but also welcomes over 100 teams of preparatory tournaments for children's leagues.

Within road infrastructure, the Abra Honda Low Water Crossing in the municipality of San Sebastián is a project under construction that will benefit the community and that is focused on mitigating risks during future events. The Guajataca River washed away the previous road during Hurricane María and the agency allocated close to \$5.2 million to rebuild it; mitigation measures will raise the road with a single-span bridge above flood level in the area. The bridge will provide a direct route from the Guacio neighborhood to most of the jobs, hospitals and supermarkets located in the urban center of San Sebastián.

Both the island's roads and bridges, as well as water and electricity services are the main resources to begin emergency response work. With that in mind, one of the agency's newly assigned projects includes the dredging of the Carraízo Reservoir. At about \$88.7 million, the funds for the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority will allow the removal of some 2.6 million cubic yards of sediment from the reservoir. The project—which included an environmental assessment in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act—will provide a larger water reserve for some 492,000 consumers in the municipalities of Caguas, Gurabo, Juncos, Las Piedras, San Juan, San Lorenzo and parts of Trujillo Alto. Carraízo provides around 90 million gallons of water daily to its customers.

Additionally, among the \$9.5 billion for the generation, transmission and distribution of the island's electric system under the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA), \$16.3 million stand out for permanent repairs to the Mayagüez Hydro-Gas Plant. The work for this generation plant includes the repair of units 1A and 1B of the gas turbine, and the replacement of the control water pump, among other tasks.

The Central Office for Recovery, Reconstruction and Resiliency (COR3) is an ally in the efforts of moving forward permanent work once the municipalities,



government agencies and non-profit organizations receive the obligations from FEMA, which today amount to \$30 billion. Given this, COR3 Executive Director Manuel A. Laboy Rivera thanked the commitment of the Biden-Harris Administration with Puerto Rico, by supporting key initiatives that have allowed the start of thousands of permanent works.

“Since the Governor Pedro Pierluisi Administration began, at COR3 we have focused our efforts on executing specific initiatives with the endorsement of FEMA. As a result of these efforts, the subrecipients have revealed through their Quarterly Progress Reports a substantial increase in the execution of permanent works when comparing the periods of December 2021. Aware of the importance of expediting disbursements, we implemented affirmative changes that allowed us to reimburse or advance some \$513 million, in the first quarter of this year, exceeding the total payments made in the years 2020 and 2021”, said COR3’s executive director

For more information about Puerto Rico’s recovery from Hurricane María, visit fema.gov/disaster/4339 y recovery.pr. Follow us on social media at Facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico, Facebook.com/COR3pr and [@COR3pr](https://Twitter.com/COR3pr).

